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Thirty-nine Reasons

WHY I AM A

Vegetarian

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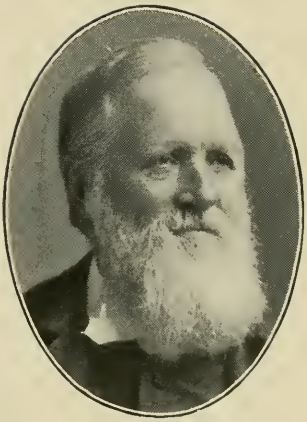

REV. HENRY S. CLUBB

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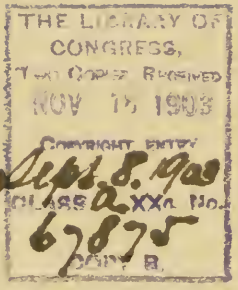

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By HENRY S. CLUBB

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Being requested to explain to the readers of THE OPTIMIST why I am a vegetarian, I will compress within as small a compass as possible, some of the reasons that have induced me, during a long and eventful life, to partake of the direct products of the cultivated field, the garden and the orchard in preference to the productions of the *abattoir*, the pen, and the fattening stall.

1. I am an Optimist: I believe that human life is destined to become a divine life. That man is created for a higher condition than that of a carnivorous or an omnivorous animal.

2. In the progressive development from the animal to the spiritual man, there is necessarily a change in the habits of eating and drinking as well as in those of affection and thought.

3. A spiritual-minded man cannot partake of that which requires him to destroy the lives of inoffensive creatures in order to partake of their bodies because the very thought is repugnant to his nature.

4. Eating a lamb does not make a man lamb-like in his character any more than eating a missionary converts a savage into a Christian. It is the wolf-nature in man that is developed by killing and eating lamb, just as the cannibal nature is developed by killing and eating missionary.

5. Lambs, sheep, and all the most useful creatures whose labor and products are useful, the ox, the camel, the horse, the elephant and the like, are docile and perform their labor on a strictly vegetarian diet. Flesh food is repugnant to their nature.

6. Man is gifted with freedom and intelligence. He can, by indulging his propensities, sink himself to a level with the lower animals or by cultivating intelligently his higher faculties and adopting habits of life conducive thereto, he can rise out of and above the animal instincts; become receptive of the higher nature and eventually enjoy the rapture of the spiritual and celestial life.

7. This freedom of choice is essential to human development, as without it man would be merely automatic and could not attain the higher powers.

8. This freedom should not be regarded an authority to continue in the animal plain of existence, but an inducement to adopt such habits as are conducive to the ideal or spiritual life.

9. The flesh, even of healthy animals, contains from the physiological operations incident to construction and reconstruction, a considerable quantity of decaying material forming uric acid and ptomaine poisons that cannot be taken as food without rendering the person so using it liable to the most distressing diseases; hence the prevalence of rheumatism, gout, apoplexy and those many

painful symptoms that sooner or later render the life of the consumer of flesh miserable.

10. As all animals killed for food are liable to disease, which the most rigid inspection of their flesh does not always detect, and as much of the so-called inspection is necessarily superficial and imperfect, there is a constant danger of the flesh of diseased animals being consumed, even where great precaution is believed to be taken.

11. As most flesh buyers trust to their butchers to supply them with "good meat," themselves unable to distinguish what can only be detected by microscopic observation and inspection, the risk of the diseases of animals, such as cancer, tuberculosis, measles, small-pox, cholera, etc., being communicated is very great, butchers not being microscopists and not interested in condemning the flesh they are offering for sale.

12. To live a pure life man must restrict himself to pure food and drink, and this is impossible while he consumes the flesh and blood of animals.

13. Almost all animals just previous to being killed are subjected to the most cruel and heartless treatment, such as traveling in railroad cars for days without food or drink; driving through streets by means of goads or sharpened rods, wrenching of their tails, etc., causing the most excruciating pain, and naturally exciting their most violent passions;

inflaming the blood and distributing bile all through their bodies, so that if they were healthy when they commenced their journey, they become full of disease before reaching their destination where the scenes of bloodshed they are permitted to witness intensify their distress and work them up to a state of frenzy and madness specially adapted to sow the seeds of insanity in those who consume their flesh.

14. The consumption of flesh as food has, like the use of tobacco and alcoholic liquors, a tendency to deaden the moral and intellectual faculties so as to blind the perceptions to the danger of the practice.

15. The only way to obtain a clear perception and an unbiassed judgment on the subject is to abstain long enough to get clear of this blinding influence. "If any man will do his will he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God." (John 7 : 17.)

16. Those only who have personally abstained from the flesh of animals for a considerable period can render an intelligent judgment on the subject.

17. All spiritually minded workers know how hard it is to convert an inveterate flesh-eater to Christianity or even to humanity.

18. Flesh-eating in America and England is the greatest impediment to progress in that moral and

spiritual growth and development which must precede an intelligent acceptance of Christianity and a love of it in the human heart.

The above are a few of the reasons for not eating the flesh of animals; now for some of the reasons for living on the productions of the field, the orchard, and the garden:

19. The cereals, of which wheat is the chief, rice, barley, oats and corn and the pulses, peas, beans and lentils, contain all the elements required for human nourishment without any poisonous elements. They constitute a pure food.

20. When the cereals are made into bread or combined with fruits and vegetables in the various ways, so well known to Vegetarian ladies, we have an ideal food and may live ideal lives! Our food may be simple, if we so prefer, or considerable variety may be enjoyed, but in either case, *it must be pure.* No *flesh,* no *lard,* no *blood,* tainted with disease.

21. Some Vegetarians prefer uncooked food; others cooked in endless variety. I prefer simple methods of preparation and only two or three dishes at a meal.

22. Some Vegetarians prefer even their grain uncooked or as ripened by the sunshine. A great variety of fruits, nuts and even vegetables can be eaten without artificial cooking (salads, for

example), so that those who prefer to do so, may do with little or no cooking. What independent lives are theirs! How vigorous! How optimistic!

23. The most laborious animals (see 5) sustain their strength on grain, grass and water, therefore there need be no fear of sustaining health and strength on what nature has provided for her most powerful and faithful laborers.

24. The enjoyment of food is greatest with a healthy appetite. The simplest food is enjoyed with the greatest zest.

25. Pythagoras is reported as directing his pupils to "Fix on that course of life which is best and custom will render it the most delightful."

26. If you would increase in the knowledge and love of truth practice the truth you already possess. (See Nos. 14 and 15.)

27. By living thus in harmony with the original law of food as given by Moses (Genesis 1 : 29) man becomes a co-operator with the Creator and becomes proportionately endowed with those faculties that enable him to resist and overcome diseased conditions.

28. All power comes from within, and if the germs of life and health implanted by the Creator are permitted to grow and expand, they will produce their natural fruits, long life and happiness.

29. Violations of divine law prevent this expansion and the natural effect of the law cannot be realized.

30. Observance of the divine law in relation to food produces that condition of confidence, hope and tranquility which is the essence of optimism.

31. The effect of pure food is to induce a condition of health that tranquilizes the nerves.

32. A healthy condition of the nerves promotes equanimity of temper and disposition, a condition most favorable to the acquisition of knowledge as observed by Dr. Benjamin Franklin when subsisting on biscuits and raisins during his apprenticeship. (See Franklin's Autobiography.)

33. The careful observation of the effect of various kinds of food on the health and consequent condition of the nerves and the use of such as produce the best effect for daily nourishment, in a few years produce a most beneficial effect on the health, physically, mentally and spiritually.

34. This habit of observation and the prompt adoption of the material food that is proved by experience to be best, gradually and naturally leads to a similar habit in regard to our mental and spiritual pabulum. Hence the one prepares for the other and induces that healthy condition of the whole man that makes the bread of life (John 6 : 35) the most delightful food.

35. A life with a fairly good constitution thus devoted to seeking the truest and best and appropriating the same is pretty sure to be a long life, even in the physical body, and renders the enjoyment of eternal life a certainty. (John 36 : 40, 50, 51, 58, 63.)

36. Thus by adopting the food prescribed by divine law in the beginning (Gen. 1 : 29) man is led to become a partaker of the hidden manna (Rev. 2 : 17) which is promised to those who overcome.

37. Such a life requires an exercise of the will to maintain obedience to the divine law; it is a life of self-denial, of conflict and of victory.

38. The power of the mind over the body grows with obedience to divine law. The exercise of kindness towards all creatures is productive of intense satisfaction and delight. The heart and affections become tender towards all and soul and body become permeated with the divine love and wisdom.

39. Such are the convictions and reasons derived from the experience of the writer, whose health, vigor and true enjoyment of life at the age of seventy-six years bear ample testimony.

HISTORICAL.

Vegetarianism has at all periods of the world's history been advocated in some form or another.

The prophetic and historical writings of the Old and New Testaments have strong allusions to it. It was practiced by many of the prophets and apostles, and Christ himself abolished the bloody sacrifices of the church and instituted the bread and wine as emblems instead of the slaughtered lamb. The Buddhist, the most prevalent of all the religions of the East, is distinguished for its adherence to the Vegetarian sentiment and practice. The philosophers of Greece and Rome were strong advocates of the same doctrine from Pythagoras to Plutarch; the poets have sung its praises from Ovid to Pope and our modern poets are glowing with the thought of the ideal life so near at hand when man shall sing and live "in tune with the Infinite" and when as Axon writes:

"Bright creatures of the air and earth
We seek not to destroy,
But share with them the gifts of life,
Of duty and of joy.
And strive to make this world of ours
Reflect His perfect will
Within whose holy mountains they
Shall neither hurt nor kill."

Modern leaders of thought, Wesley, Swedenborg, Linneas, Graham, Alcott, Trall, Kellogg and scores of writers for the newspaper and periodical press, are practically developing the Vegetarian idea; the leading newspapers of this country are

not only inserting articles as favors, but are seeking for information on the subject and paying for the same.

The agricultural, horticultural and manufacturing interests of the country are receiving the advancing impulse, and while the stockyards and packing houses find it necessary to advance prices to the great injury of their respective trades, the growth of cereals, fruit and vegetables is so extending as to rapidly advance the land values of the South and West, which still further embarrasses the stock raisers. Manufactories of health foods are springing up in various parts of the country, of which that of Quaker Oats, by Ferdinand Schumacher, a vegetarian, was the pioneer. Battle Creek, Michigan, with its great Sanitarium, has become a great centre of the health food industry, which, however, is extending throughout the country. Advertisements of health foods now occupy spaces formerly monopolized by quack medicines, a most healthful sign of the times.

Almost all cities of prominence in the country have Hygea Restaurants or Physical Culture Cafés, and Vegetarian Hotels and Boarding Houses are in demand and will follow as a necessity as the odor of flesh and fish is becoming intolerable to the advancing refinement of intelligent and progressive people who know how sweet and joyful are the homes that are free from it.

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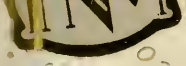

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